



Tom Lantos

**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS
RANKING DEMOCRATIC MEMBER**

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Lantos Rejects Calls for Kofi Annan to Step Down From United Nations Post Over Oil for Food Scandal

Washington, DC – Congressman Tom Lantos (D-CA), the Ranking Democrat on the House International Relations Committee, rejected the renewed calls today by Senate and House colleagues for the resignation of United Nations Secretary General Kofi Annan over the Oil for Food scandal.

“I am appalled by the revelations of sloppy administration of the Oil for Food program by the UN Secretariat, and I remain committed to a thorough investigation of how UN management failures contributed to Saddam’s larceny.” Lantos said. “But the recent flurry of calls for the resignation of Secretary General Kofi Annan are way over the line. I have known Kofi Annan for years, and have always found him to be a man of the utmost integrity.

“Secretary General Kofi Annan has been a highly effective manager of the UN at a time of great challenge for the organization,” Lantos said. “As such, his leadership has served U.S. interests. He has also responded quickly and credibly to charges of malfeasance and possible corruption in the Oil for Food program by appointing an independent panel headed by former U.S. Federal Reserve Board Chairman Paul Volcker to investigate the matter thoroughly. When Mr. Volcker makes his report to the Secretariat in January, I have complete confidence that the Secretary General will swiftly respond to the report’s findings.”

The House International Relations Committee has held two hearings this year on Oil For Food and is conducting a wide-ranging investigation into the abuses of the program.

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